

In his "Response to Arguments" bridging pages 4 and 5 of the latest Office Action, the examiner makes several points which require consideration.

(1)

In the prior RESPONSE applicants addressed the rejection under 35 USC 102(b) over Ennis by noting:

..... where is the "umbrella-like cap" of claim 18? It must have "tensile strength" and "low flexure strength" and a "circular base surface." Ennis does not, it is respectfully submitted, disclose or suggest such a cap. The "brushes" 18 or 20 are seen in Fig. 4. There is no continuous structure here. Instead, each is made up of what appear to be individual and separate components. This certainly does not comprise an umbrella unless one were to ignore the obvious meaning of what an umbrella is. But whatever meaning one applies, it cannot include a structure which includes individual and separate components. The purpose behind the arrangement shown in Ennis has no connection to the purpose of the present invention. That is very clear from a reading of Ennis. For the purpose of cleaning one would not want a continuous structure. The individual and separate element configuration is much more efficient.

In reply the examiner states on pages 4 and 5 of the latest Office Action::

..... membrane which comprises of the [sic] sheets altogether has tensile strength, low flexure strength and a circular base surface as in figures 1 and 4. The membrane constitutes the umbrella-like cap.

Where in Ennis is the membrane? Applicants cannot find any structure in Ennis which would comprise the membrane which applicants are claiming. The "sheets" referred to by the examiner as comprising the membrane are not apparent to applicants. How do these "sheets"

which are not discernible in Ennis have tensile strength, flexure strength and a circular base surface. None of these limitations in claim 18 are seen in Ennis, and if the examiner does see them, then they should be clearly pointed out.

(2)

In addressing the non-analogous argument raised by applicants the examiner states on page 4 of the latest Office Action:

In this case, the reference teaches a rotating membrane which opens by rotational force and droops at rest. It thus addresses the particular problem of opening up a membrane which droops at rest. It thus can certainly be used as an umbrella device if desired.

Again, where is the membrane? Brushes 18 and 20 composed of "deep pile, tufted (randomly oriented, monofilament fibrous material....as shown in Fig. 13," can hardly be viewed as a membrane. They appear to be a plurality of individual pieces of the noted fabric. There simply is no reasonable way to view this structure as a membrane. If this structure cannot be viewed as a membrane, then the mere fact that they respond to centrifugal force does not make them analogous to the membrane being claimed. Applicants' problem does not involve opening and closing brushes. It is a long stretch, therefore, to conclude that the problem faced by Ennis and applicants are the same.

(3)

Regarding Belanger, the examiner states on page 5 of the latest Office Action:

Belanger teaches two fixed disks clamping a membrane.

What membrane? Applicants cannot find a membrane in Belanger.

The examiner is clearly staining to construct a rejection of the pending claims instead of viewing the claims fairly and applying references properly.

The examiner is urged to consider the above and find claims 18-24 allowable or to at least indicate where the structure questioned above is to be found in the references.

Respectfully submitted,



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